

"That was between you two. But this simple grandmother, with her generous hospitality, and the girl whose faith in the clouds and the mountains makes a life of pitiable poverty into a poem! They cannot understand what you intend to do with these. They nevir heard of the academy or the salon. It is not fair."

Then, as if even the roof of the veranda made the air stifling, he arose suddenly and walked down the long path before the rancheira. In the clear night everything melted and softened into an all infolding charm.

"Why does he go there and what is it that makes me care to go? It is the same object, but we are drawn in different ways. 'What fools we mortals be.'"

The Oregon grape was in full bloom. The deep, glossy leaves rattled as he passed too near, and their sharp little edges scratched his hand. But the yellow blossoms sent a tender fragrance out from their clustered sprays that made him pause. He looked up and out. Rising above the trees at his right stretched the firm cutline of the Cascade range, tall and forbidding with their great forests of somber firs. His eyes ran down the range until they rested upon the conclike summit on whose side nestled the hat. He looked on at the low lying clouds and at the great white mountain that held its stately head high above them, and as he looked he almost heard a tender, pulsing voice call softly:

"Good evenin, pretty clouds. Good evenin, ole Mount Hood, sweet evenin to yo'."

CHAPTER IV.

Another week passed, and Wilmot grew furious as he missed his companion day after day. McAlvord noticed the all day absences of his guest and explained indulgently to the other that he supposed it was the way with artists, though he had always thought this particular artist was too fond of society to spend so much time alone.

"Still, there's fascination in these great distances and mighty hills."

and looked out toward the Cascades, standing like immense cones, sometimes shoulder to shoulder, often entirely alone. "If I were to stay here long," he said, "and did not break into the repose of thought by winter months spent in the city. I would sarely come to have many deities and to enthrone them all about me. As it is I always lift my hat to Mount Hood in the morning."

McAlvord went on to look after his men, while in his visitor's heart there rang out like the voice of a bird, "Good mornin, ole Mount Hood, sweet mornin

and became sure that it was not good for him to be here. He was growing morbid. His great American novel would never be written at this rate. It was not well to grant himself this respite. Shut up within the walls of a city and meeting other small entities he had conceived himself to be some one. He could work there, in a paltry way, and could think. Here he was lest. It was too vast.

With the beginning of May Mrs. Mc-Alvord, the host's mother, would come. Miss McAlvord, Craymer's fiancee, and several of her intimate friends, with a not plan another day's pleasure until maid or two, were to accompany her. The old rancheira was to be gay with young life, and the Chinese who had chief control began to make elaborate preparations in that slow oriental fashion which astonishes every American by the ease with which mountains of work can be accomplished with smiling unhaste and rather with the air of one at leisure than of one burdened with

The day before the coming of the ladies Craymer disappeared. His sketching tackle was dutifully strapped to the saddle, but when once his pony had climbed the bridle path and brushes and paints were on the ground all fiercely. Then calming himself, "You thoughts of work were over.

Perhaps he might not come again in a long time. The purling of the tiny



"I always lift my hat to Mount Hood." stream was in his ears. It went singing enough to bind yourself to any one. down its rocky way into the bottomless pool as merrily as if it had not been Some elderly aunt or maiden cousin stranded on the wrong side of the range | could chaperone, and 'twould take from that on which flowed its larger sister—the mighty Columbia.

He looked at the fair face which, without his consciousness, was growing a necessity to him. He lifted the long braids that fell below her waist and wound them like a crown about her he answered.

head. He fastened them there with the

polished ebony handles of his brushes. Then he took her by the shoulders and held her at arm's length to study the effect. Artistic pleasure at the result of his skill shone in his face. Presently something else awakened theresomething which held the girl in thrall.

But she met it with steady eyes. The innocence of her own heart made her take on a dignity which conquered the man before her. He began to realize something of that which he had hardly thought worth the analysis.

"Laurel," he said suddenly, "you are a goddess. Great heaven, why cannot I have you always as I have you now? Society and conventionalities, what bosh they are! Simplicity and dignity constitute manner. And you would win homage at the court of any queen."

He clasped the shoulders until they hurt. But she did not move. She only looked at him calmly, unbewildered. "Yo' kin hev me," she said in her

slow, tender tone that pulsed and trembled as she spoke. "Before yo' comeyo' 'n th' tall un-I b'longed t' th' clouds 'n the great mountain. S'ci'ty? I dunno what that do mean."

There were gentleness, innocence and reserve in her nature. It shook the shallower one. Craymer lowered his head until the pure eyes could not look into his own. He was sitting a little below her upon the mossy hillside, and his face had been lifted as he spoke. Now she slid her arm about his neck and drew his head against her breast. She ran her fingers lightly through his hair. She touched his cheek with a slow, gentle motion. Then, bending her head, she pressed her lips upon his forehead with a slow, solemn kiss, as she might have kissed the child if it had been kneeling in prayer before her.

His lips had never touched her. Hers had never before touched him. He had sometimes reached out to caress her hands-they were so like to brown birds in their slow, fluttering motions. And he had smoothed the long braids of her hair as he had done today, but The cattle king bared his fine head whenever he encountered the flerce, reproachful eyes of Wilmot after each of these later visits he had comforted himself that no harm had been done. She was the same untamed girl woman that they had found at the first, with her heart untouched by anything earthlya devotee of the clouds and of the stately, snow wreathed mountai 1.

CHAPTER V.

The ladies arrived next day. McAlvord and his guests went to meet them upon long, swinging buckboards of the primitive sort, with chains upon which to rest the feet and long, yielding straps Then he grew angry with himself for the back. These were voted by the merry party to be more delightful pleasure wagons than even the Irish jaunting

The days that followed were filled with laughter, with music, with breakneck canters upon swift ponies and with evening promenades upon the long veranda of the old rancheira.

After a time Craymer became restless and complained that he must do something beside sketching merry people in stylish clotking—however picturesque-ly they might be "set." He must get off for a whole day's work. He would he had earned it with work.

Wilmot was not with the others when this complaint in its final strength was entered upon. He chanced, however, to come up in time to catch its impost. Craymer did not seem to notice his coming, but turned toward his betrothed, who looked at him kindly.

A half hour later the two men stood alone together.

"My reason for speaking," said Wilmot, "is that I would warn you, Craymer. You are an attractive fellow

"Thanks, awfully!" "This is not play," said the other

are to be married soon?" "Not until September." "Well, September is coming," he insisted in a Nemesis tone. "In Sep-

tember then?" "Yes, of course. Why do you ask?" "For this reason: With that answer I want you to relinquish going where

you intend to go tomorrow." "And by what right do you ask it? It's about time that your volunteer espionage should cease. I shall do as I hanged please in this and every other

matter." He turned and walked away. Wilmot by a strong effort smothered the indignation that stirred him and, following him, laid a hand upon his shoulder and said in gentle tone: "I beg your pardon. If you will wait a few days and give the subject a little serious

thought, I will not trouble you again." Craymer said something which sounded like an assent. Wilmot accepted it and was turning away, when the other asked bluntly:

"Why don't you go there yourself and take her out of those brutal surroundings? You haven't been foolish There are ways of getting on with it. blamed little worldly contact for her to outshine them all. I say," he insisted with a sort of fur, "why don't you do

Wilmot ground his teeth. "You have done your best to make it impossible,'

An eruptive denial rose to Craymer's lips, but for once he grew manly. "I understand you," he said. "I haven't been exactly square in this thing, but she was always asking about you and trying to get me to talk about you. I told you of it. If you'd gone, I would Have staid away. But-I'm frank now. Believe me for once, never till that last day did one word pass my li that need vex you. Then there was schething in her look as I was planning to paint her that made me say that I wanted her with me always."

Wilmot turned fiercely away. "Spare me," he said, "a recital of one of your

But this time Craymer followed and laid a hand upon his shoulder. "Hear the rest of it," he insisted. "Even then she said that she thought she was happy before I came-I 'an th' tall un'-and, as I live, I did not harm her. She leaned over and kissed my forehead as she might kiss the snow mountain if it were near enough. But there was something about her that awed me. It's the something that's drawing me now. She doesn't care for me, though she thinks that she does. It is you for whom she cares. And because I was with you and you do not come to her she is trying to satisfy her beautiful, true, pure heart with me. Gods, but I am a fool!"

Then Wilmot spoke through his teeth. "This is the truth, and all of it?"

"All, as I am alive," answered Craymer, looking directly into his face. Then he turned and went alone into the

An evening breeze, like the beating of great wings, stirred the leaves. The Chinaman began to light the veranda lamps. Their tinted rays seemed quivering with deceit. As Wilmot strode out into the shadow he began to understand the old brutality that could insist upon a satisfaction whose medium was made of gunpowder or steel.

He had got but a little distance when his hand was seized by another hand, and he was dragged with all the strength of a youthful figure out beyond the skirting of shrubbery into the pale

CHAPTER VI

When Craymer left her, on the day before the ladies came to the rancheira, Laurel went with him to the edge of the little cleared spot from which she could watch him all the way down the hill and into the trail that led through bunch grass across the arm of the great

Few birds are found in this desolate region, but one was calling to its mate from a near tree and the cry throbbed passionately through all the air. She watched until he had waved a last adieu and ridden swiftly into the encircling shadows. Then she turned her eyes upward. The sky was cloudless save a few fleecy lines that stretched out toward her beloved mountain. She reached out her arms and a look of trust like a di vine radiance came upon her face.

"Take keer o' him," she said. "Keep both on us-him 'n me."

She had not been prepared for this new experience. No girl friend had made her a confidant; no book had come in her way which gave the modern keen analysis of a maiden's heart when first it feels the emotion of love. If such a one had fallen into her hands, it would not have enlightened her. She could not read the simplest words. The few rude folk in her home had never coupled her name with that of any of the swarthy hunters who, at intervals of many weeks, had climbed the mountain path. How desolate she had been without knowing it!

The child came seeking her. It put up its arms and cried piteously. She clasped it to her heart and turned to ascend the path.

The next morning she said to her heart, "He beant comin today." But as the time came when she used to hear his step, she stole to the spot under the blasted pine whence she could see out over the level waste beyond.

"He beant thar," she said, but she smiled over at the mountain and up at the soft, bright sky.

The next morning it was the same, and the next, and so on for many days. Longing gains strength by delay. The days could not come fast enough. She looked eagerly across the lowlands, for her heart had gone that way, and her



She could watch him all the way down the hill.

eyes must of necessity follow. But as yet no shadow touched her. She went about in her life of toil and privation while her heart was filled with a sacred

Once could not pity her even when knowing the untruth in the object of her thought. It was not possible. To trust as she did was to walk the borders of limitless bliss. It could hardly occur to her to question. Every morning and every evening she smiled as she sent a greeting over to old Mount Hood and

up toward the high, serene sky. The weeks dragged by. A new, strange tremor possessed her heart. A pathetic, farreaching look went out from her eyes. The good night to the clouds and to the mountain began to

lose its joyous ring. One morning she went much earlier to the cleared space and waited longer. Even then the sigh that she gave was

| him; he could not come. It did not enter her thought that he might not come even if the something had broken its grasp. Her nature was one of trust. All this waiting did not help her to learn

one letter of doubt. "He be sick," she asserted with sad conviction. "Th' long heat, it be allers bringin fevers." Then she stretched out her hands, and, though she did not know that bending the knee meant anything, she knelt. Her eyes covered themselves with a mist of tears and refused to see even her beloved mountain.

The next day passed without his coming. Her thoughts grew somber. Her bright manner intermitted. In the late afternoon she called the youth to her.

"I be goin t' see him," she said. He was filled with an undefined sense of terror and tried to dissuade her. She only insisted the more strenuously that she must go. At last, grown prematurely old already, he grew prematurely wise because he saw that Laurel was in trouble. He went to the grandfather and wheedled him into letting them take the beasts and go for a long ride over the old desert trail.

They rode swiftly into the "scabby desert," with its alternations of clayey and sandy soil. On through the gray sagebrush and the greasewood-hypocrite of another and better shrub. The rocky hollows were dry and empty as if winter snows had never melted in them to serve as drink for thousands of cattle which the herder turns in winter upon the desert to crop the bunch grass that lives for a few short months.

The gray and dismal ride was in harmony with the thoughts of both. Laurel was impelled by a new feeling in which no thought of herself stirred, and which grew into a terrible certainty that some unknown evil encompassed her beloved, holding him in thrall.

When they reached McAlvord's fortile land, they rode more slowly until they came upon a stream. Here they dismounted, and the youth staid to water the beasts and to tether them behind a clump of bushes, where they could browse the juicy grass upon the borders

of the stream. Laurel went swiftly forward along the shaded drive. The sun was gone. but the afterglow spread its radiance over the earth. As she neared the ranchiera the sound of happy voices greated her. She stopped suddenly as if deterred from her purpose, bent her head and peered between the branches of a

So fair a vision of life had never before greeted her eyes, nor had it entered her happiest dreams. She caught her breath as she looked at the long veranda, gay with fringed hammocks and great lounging chairs and dainty willow rockers. Bright rugs were strewn over the floor. Baskets of flowers depended from the outer roof line. Long vines swung slowly in the evening air.

Human forms were the jewels in this chanting scene-strong men and graceful women. Her swift glance found the one she sought. "Th' tall un" was not there to divert her attention.

She read with anxious eyes, but saw no line of care or illness upon the gay features she had learned so well. He was the center of the group and leaned lazily back in a great armchair, looking up with a smile into the face of a girl who stood beside him and who were gown as soft and white as the cuc worn by the snow mountain.

He seemed to assent to something this one asked of him, for she went through a doorway, upon either side of which hung fleecy curtains, and returned with a strange something in her hand-something that she held out to him and that he took with another smile into her face and a few words which Laurel could not hear, they were

The one she had come to see toyed carelessly with the strange instrument and, moving his fingers across it, drew forth a tender sound such as had never before been heard by the unseen listener. It was not like a bird's voice, nor a choir of birds. It was not like the sighing of the wind through the firs. It was better and sweeter, for it seemed the spirit of each blending and interchanging and softened until fitted to minister to that fair company.

He began to sing some words in an unknown tongue which thrilled her through and through. Something that, because of the look upon the face of that other girl, Laurel knew he was singing to her out of all that happy

And this was a girl young like herself, tall and slight, with proudly carried head, but fair instead of darkheavenly fair, with hair that gleamed like "a bit o' wheatfield when th' sun be shinin," poor Laurel said to herself.

She had never before seen any one with golden hair. That of the child was flaxen, but dun of color like the fog that sometimes lay dank and cold about the mountains in winter, while this was gloriously warm like the sunlight and strayed over the fair forehead in little waving lines.

There must be something to make a heart stand still at the first sight of a face crowned so shiningly. One may love the dusky masses better, but he is sure to be arrested at sight of the other. If the English really received the compliment of which they are so proud when, in the slave market of ancient Rome, the good St. Gregory was so stirred at sight of a fair northman as to call him "not Angle, but an angel," then what must have thrilled the innocent being whose heart was so in sympathy with all beauty, whether of earth or sky? Ar Charleston

The looks and the dress of this girl were like those from another world than Laurel's-a world to which the heart out in the shadow must own that he, too, belonged. Herself was the alien one. As she looked and as she listened to the tender music she began to under-

The afterglow died suddenly. Tinted lights shone out from an inner fair Ly Camden within, but those two remained. The Ar Kingville music ceased. He laid the instrument Ly Kingville upon the rug beside him and held out Ar Camden

his hands. The bright one arose and sat upon the broad arm of his chair and laid her arm not for herself. Something was holding | about his neck. He lifted her other hand |

to his lips. His head was against her shoulder. His words were low, but Laurel's heart interpreted the tone. Her innocent soul was stung. A sense of cruelty shortened her breath. God be merciful to a young heart when it learns its first lesson in the untruth of life!

She sank upon her knees and with a faint cry would have fallen but that the youth caught her about the waist and dragged her along the turf beside the drive, so that their footsteps made no

He untethered the horses and lifted Laurel upon her own. They were soon in the edge of the desert, where he drew freer breath. But when her beast paused, unheeded by her, to browse a bit of chemise wood he dismounted and pulled it hastily forward. Then he tied the two tethering ropes together and led the animal upon which the young girl sat in almost utter unconsciousness.

The desert solitude upon one hand and the deep, mysterious mountain sol-

itude upon the other weighed upon his spirit. A coyote howled dismally in the distance. He jerked the tethering rope and urged his own beast into a swifter

At last they reached the point where the trail turned toward the mountain. The scraggly cedars became ghostly figures and the red barked pines and tall firs seemed threatening spirits. Still he urged their way upward, looking back to see that the drooping, swaying figure did not fall.

When the cleared space was reached, Laurel aroused, gave a slow glance about her and slid to her feet in the very spot under the blasted pine tree where she had watched the coming and going of her beloved. She sank upon the ground and turned her face toward the snow mountain with a hoarse half

The youth had grown to man's estate in brave sympathy and ready action. He cared for the beasts with gentle caresses because they had been so faithful and brought a blanket to cover the still form that lay beneath the lightning scarred tree. . .

TO BE CONTINUED.

Atlantic Coast Line.

MANCHESTER AND AUGUSTA R. R



TRAINS GOING SOUTH.

	No. #35	No. †37
	8. m.	8. m.
Ly Darlington,		7 55
Ly Elliott,		8 40
Ar Sumier,		9 25
Lv Sumter,	4 29	
Ar Creston,	5 17	
Ly Creston,		15 45
Ar Pregnails,		9 15
Ar Orange-urg,	5 40	
Ar Denmark.	6 12	

TRAINS GOING NORTH.

IKAINS GOING NORTH					
	No.	†56	No	. *32	
		m.			
v Denmark,			4	25	
v Orangeburg			5	03	
ov Pregnalla,	10	00			
Ar Creston,		50			
T Creston,			5	30	
Ar Sumter,			6	25	
v Sumter,	6	40			
Ar Elliott,	7	25.			
Ar Darlington,	8	15			

*Daily, †Daily except Sanday. Trains 32 and 35 carry through Pullman Palace Buffet Sleeping Cars between New York and Macon via Augusta. H. M. Emerson, T. M. Emerson, Gen. Pass. Agt. Traffic Manager, J. R. Kenley, Gen'l Manager.

p. m. p. m.

SOUTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA RAILROAD.

PASSENGER DEPARTMENT.

Corrected to Jan. 24th, 1297.

		DAILY.	DAILY
Lv	Charleston	7 10 a m	5 30 p m
Ar	Summerville	7 46 a m	6 10 p m
"	Pregnalls	18 18 a m	6 50 p m
"	Georges	8 30 a m	7 04 p m
"	Branchville	9 00 a m	7 50 p m
	Rowesville	9 15 a m	8 07 p tu
"	Orangebarg	9 28 a m	8 24 p m
	St Matthews	9 48 a m	8 48 p m
	Fort Motte	10 00 a m	9 03 p m
	Kingville	10 10 a m	9 20 p m
	Columbia	10 55 a m	10 10 p m
Lv	Columbia	7 00 a m	4 00 p m
Ar	Kingville	740 a m	4 44 p m
	Fort Motte	7 tlam	4 55 pm
	St'Matthews	8 02 a m	5 69 p m
16	Orangeburg	3 24 a m	5 27 p m
	Rowesville	8 38 a m	5 42 p m
**	Branchville	8 55 a m	5 55 p m
::	Georgea	9 35 а ш	637 pm
41	Pregnalls	9 48 a m	6 50 pm
11	Summervilla	10 22 a m	7 22 p m
**	Charleston	11 00 a m	8 00 p m
			2.2

	Summerville	10 22 4 111	1 22 P
**	Charleston	11 00 a m	8 00 p m
Lv	Charleston	7 10 a m;	5 30 p m
11	Branchville	9 15 a m	7 50 p m
4.	Bamnerg	941 a m	8 19 p m
26	Denmark	9 52 a m	8 31 p m
	Blackville	10 10 a m	9 50 p m
41	Williston	10 27 a m	9 10 p m
	Aiken	11 09 a m	9 57 p m
	Augusta	11 51 a m	10 45 p m
	Augusta	6 20 a m	3 20 pm
Lv	Aiken	7 08 s m	4 07 p m
16	Williston	7 49 a m	4 44 p m
	Blackville	8 08 a m	5 03 p tu
"	Denmark	8 20 a m	5 17 pm
41	Bamberg	8 33 a m	5 29 p m
"	Branchville	9 10 a ra	5 55 p tz
	Obselenten	11 00 0 00	0 00 00

Fast Express, Augusta and Washington, with Through Sleepers to New York.

Ly Augusta 3 44 pm Ar Aiken " Denmark 4 59 p m Ly Denmark Ar Augusta Daily Except Sunday. scene. One by one the others went "Camden Junction 935 a m 355 p a leave Chadbourn 5 15 p. m.; rive Chadbourn 5 15 p. m.; leave Chadbourn 45 p m., arrive at Hub at 10 05 a m 4 35 pm 6 00 8 D

> " Camden Junction 11 00 a m 8 15 a B 11 55 a m L. A. EMERSON, E. S BOWEN, Gen'l Man'g'r Traffic Man'gr' General offices-Charleston, S. C.

10 25 a m

6 40 a m

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12 27 pm

5 20 pm

5 50 pm

The state of the s TRAINS GOING NORTE.

No. 72.* Leave Wilsons Kill! 9 10 am Jordon, 9 35 s m 9 45 a m Davis, 10 10 a m Summerton. " Millard, 10 45 a m Silver, Packsville, Tindal, 11 55 p m

W. & S. June.

Davis,

Ar. Sumter, 12 30 p m TRAINS GOING SOUTH. No. 73.0 2 30 p m W. & S. Jnnc., 2 33 p m 2 50 p m Tindal. Packsville, 310 pm 3 35 pm Silver, Millard, 3 45 p m Summerton, 4 40 p m

Jordon, Ar. Wilson Mill. .6 30 pm Trains between Millard and St. Paul leave Millard 10 15 a m and 3 45 p m., arriving St. Paul 10 25 a m and 2 55 p m. Returning leave St. Paul 10 35 a m and 4 10 p m, and arrive Millard 10 45 a m and 4 20 p m. Dai-

ly except Sunday. Daily except Surday. THUMAS WILSON

Atlantic Coast Line.

WILMINGTON, COLUMBIA AND AUGUS TA RAILROAD.

CONDENSED SCHEDULE. TO THOU

TRAINS GOING SOUTE. Dated Dec. 20, 1897. No.55. No.35 Leave Wilmington ·4 00 6 43 7 25

Leave Marion Arrive Florence P. M. A.M \$8 00 #3 25 Leave Florence 9 10 4 29 Arrive Sumter No.52. P. M. A.M. Leave Sumter Arrive Columbia No. 52 runs through from Charleston via

Central R. R., leaving Charleston 7 a. m., Lance 8 28 a. m., Manning 9 05 a. m.

TRAINS GOING NORTE.

	Nc.54.	No.53.
	A.M	P.W
Leave Columbia	*6 45	* 5 00
Arrive Samer	8 08	6 20 No.32
	A M.	P.M.
Leave Sublice		◆€ 30
Arrive Florence	92	7 45
	A M	
Leave Figrance	9 18	
Leave Marion	10 36	
Arrive Wilmington	1 20	

· Daily except Suncay. No. 53 runs through to Charleston, S. C., vie Central R. R., arriving Manning 618 p. m., Lanes 7 36 pm., Charleston 9 15 p. m. Trains on Conway Branch loave Chadbourn 11 43 a. m., arrive at Conway 8 45 a m 2 25 p m way 20 p. m., returning leave Conway at 6 25 p. m., returning leave Hub 8 30 a. m. arrive at Chadbourn 9.15 a. m. Daily ex-

cept Sunday. †Daily except Sunday.

J. K. KENLY, Gen'l Manager.

T. M. EMERSON, Traffic Manager. H. M. EMERSON, Gen'l Pass. Agent.